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Changeover in the C.I.A.

John A. McCone, President Kennedy's selection as new head of the Central Intelligence Agency, has shown in his past governmental posts that he has the qualities needed for effective performance in Washington: high administrative ability, driving energy and the capacity to get along well with Congress. He will need all these qualities, and more, in his new position. He will need also the firmness to weed out from the mass of competent C. I. A. personnel those responsible for past failures and those few whose employment was due to other qualities than professional excellence.

C. I. A.'s retiring chief, Allen Dulles, has served his country with genuine distinction for many years. It is in the nature of intelligence organizations—and their directors—that the great bulk of their work must be conducted in secrecy, and that in so far as their accomplishments do become publicly known their errors and failures are likely to be better advertised than their successes. Despite some administrative difficulties and operational fiascoes, there can be no doubt of the contribution Mr. Dulles has made to the nation's security. As President Kennedy said, he has always been "a courageous, selfless public servant," and his country owes him much.